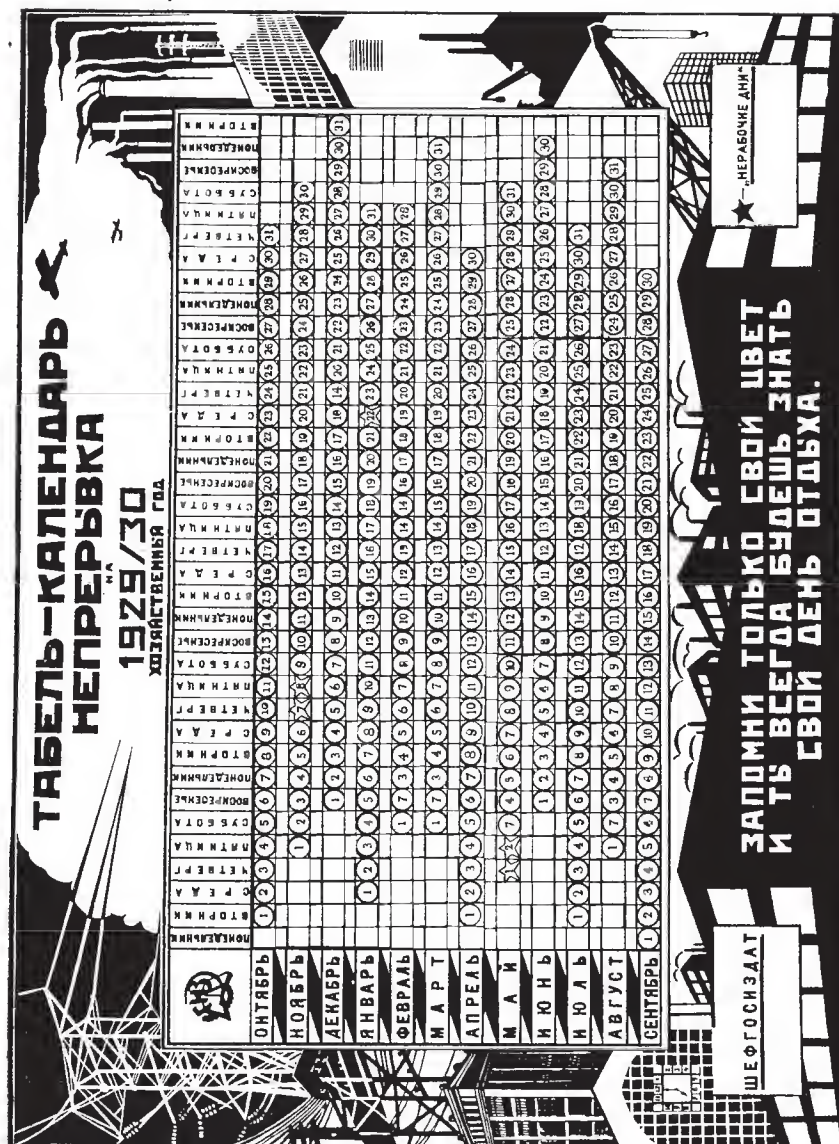


# CONTINUOUS WORKING WEEK

СССР  
THE USSR

НА СТРОЙКЕ  
IN CONSTRUCTION





Wall Calendar in Soviet factory. Each circle has a different color; a worker knows his rest day by looking for "his color."

## CONTINUOUS WORKING WEEK IN THE SOVIET UNION

"Less political prattle, more attention to the simple but vital central questions of communist construction work, springing forth from life itself, substantiated by life. This earnest appeal should constantly be repeated for all of us, by our writers, agitators, propagandists, organizers, etc."

Lenin "The Great Initiative."

Published by  
FRIENDS OF THE SOVIET UNION  
UNITED STATES SECTION  
Series on the FIVE YEAR PLAN  
Pamphlet No. Two

PRICE 10 CENTS

## CONTINUOUS WORKING WEEK

"Let us catch up with and surpass the technical development of the leading capitalist countries." This slogan expresses the purpose and the aim of the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union and the instrument, through which they hope to realize and fulfill it, is the Five Year Plan for complete socialization of industry and the industrialization of agriculture.

At the time that the Five Year Plan was worked out, the idea known as the *continuous working week*, or the uninterrupted working week, had not yet been fully revealed. This idea was born of the enthusiasm of the masses for the successful carrying out, as rapidly as possible, of the Five Year Plan. Together with one other factor, *Socialist Competition*, both of which steps were introduced by the initiative of the masses themselves, it has been possible, not only to successfully realize the first year of the Five Year Plan, but to better the figures set, and to raise the slogan of the completion of the tremendous work outlined in the Five Year Plan in four years.

The decree of the 27 of August, 1929, officially introduced the uninterrupted working week to the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union. This decree is of world historical importance. It signifies one of the most complete changes of the economic methods taken over from the capitalists.

From year to year the feeling of social responsibility among the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union increases, and the successes which have been obtained have made it possible to take this new step forward and introduce the continuous working week into the factories and offices. It is being gradually introduced also into all State and other bureaus in the U.S.S.R. Most Soviet institutions are in some way or other connected or interdependent upon Soviet industry. Therefore the methods of work in these institutions must correspond with the systems and methods of work used in industry. Even tho it was conceived out of the enthusiasm of the masses to push the Five Year Plan of socialist industrialization and construction ahead as fast as possible, the continuous working week is by no means a temporary thing. It represents a decided improvement in



comparison with the "working week" of capitalist economy, and it will remain, and what is more, it will no doubt be adopted in every country as soon as the working class becomes victorious.

#### WHAT IT MEANS.

The continuous working week means that the factories, mines, mills, and other workshops and offices will continue operations thruout the whole year without regular stop days. This does not mean, however, that the workers will work all the time. As a matter of fact, with the introduction of the continuous working week the number of rest days *will be increased* and will be distributed more uniformly thruout the year.

Already the bulk of factories and workshops that have begun on the non-stop production basis, are working on a five-day week basis. Every worker receives *one day rest* after every *four days* of work. Instead of having 52 Sundays and ten religious holidays as under the czar, the workers in the Soviet Union will now have 72 rest days, plus five revolutionary holidays, November 7 and 8; May 1 and 2; and January 22 (Lenin's Memorial). On these holidays work ceases altogether in every workshop and office in the whole country. On all religious holidays as well as on New Year's Day work will be performed as usual. On the revolutionary holidays mentioned above work will be performed only at those workshops where any stoppage is impossible. In case a weekly rest day coincides with a revolutionary holiday, the workers must be granted another rest day within the following two weeks.

In this way the worker gets 77 full days of rest. On top of this he has his annual holiday of 15 days with *full pay*, for workers who work above ground, and those who work underground or in hazardous and dangerous industries are given a month's holiday with full pay. From this we see that the workers have more free days than previously and they are distributed more regularly thruout the year. Now there are no "holy" days but the common rest-days for all are the revolutionary holidays. The regular free days are differently distributed for different groups, every day of the

year, there is always a definite group of workers that have that as a complete rest day.

#### HOW IT WORKS

All the workers in a factory or workshop are divided into five groups. Each group has its rest days pre-determined. The following table shows how the rest days were arranged for the five groups during the month of October, 1929.

*Rest days for each group according to days of the month.*

1st Group	1st	6th	11th	16th	21st	26th	31st
2nd Group	2nd	7th	12th	17th	22nd	27th	
3rd Group	3rd	8th	13th	18th	23rd	28th	
4th Group	4th	9th	14th	19th	24th	29th	
5th Group	5th	10th	15th	20th	25th	30th	

In this way each group of workers gets its rest days in turn which always fall on a different day of the week, as for example, let us say that the first rest day of the first group comes on Tuesday, the next rest day for this group will therefore be on Sunday, then Friday, Wednesday, Monday, Saturday and so on.

#### HOW IT WORKS FOR SPECIAL GROUPS.

In the mining industry and other branches of the metallurgical industry a special system of the continuous working week was introduced containing slightly different arrangement from other industries. Because of the constant necessity of making repairs all work in the mines stops one day each month. Therefore it was decided to adopt a six day working week in the mines. In these branches the workers receive one day rest after every five working days and on top of this, a whole extra day rest each month, which is a general holiday for all the workers in the mines. The miners in this way enjoy just as many free days as workers in industries that work on a five day basis. The workers in the mining industry are divided into six groups and their rest days are arranged as follows:

1st Group	1st	7th	13th	19th	25th	31st
2nd Group	2nd	8th	14th	20th	26th	31st

3rd Group	3rd	9th	15th	21st	27th	31st
4th Group	4th	10th	16th	22nd	28th	31st
5th Group	5th	11th	17th	23rd	29th	31st
6th Group	6th	12th	18th	24th	30th	31st

Up to December, 1929, more than 250 mines had introduced the continuous working week and by March, 1930, it is estimated that all mines in the Soviet Union will be working on this basis, with the exception of a few mines where it cannot yet be utilized due to technical or economic reasons, but this applies to but a very few.

It can also be pointed out here that in some other industries as for example, cotton, the continuous working week cannot yet be introduced, owing to shortage of raw material, often imported, because delivery of such material is not yet guaranteed.

Speaking of the continuous working week one should not forget to mention that the seven-hour day is now almost universal in Soviet industries and that the six-hour day prevails for those who work in the mines and in dangerous occupations.

#### A FACTOR IN REDUCING UNEMPLOYMENT.

This new system requires that the machines work uninterruptedly, six or seven hours a day every day of the year (with exception of revolutionary holidays. In order to be able to do this more workers are required to run the machines. The number of working days for every individual worker will be less than before, but the number of working days for the benefit of society as a whole will be increased from 300 to 360 days per year, and this also means that the number of workers engaged in industry will be increased, which is a big factor in reducing unemployment, and for improving the conditions of the working class. This increase in the output of industry brought about by employing more workers during more working days each year in turn increases the wages of the workers. One should keep constantly in mind, when speaking of the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union, that they are the owners of industry, and that all profits from industry, derived through higher efficiency in

labor methods or through the continuous working week or any other economic improvement benefits the workers, they being the owners of industry. Increased productivity means shorter hours, higher wages for all workers in the Soviet Union.

If this continuous working week should be introduced under capitalism it would *not benefit the worker*. The worker could not improve his standard of living or obtain the full quota of free days under capitalism. On the contrary, the workers in a capitalist country would be forced to work uninterruptedly, as for example is now the case in the steel mills where the two shifts, twelve-hour day, is in force. The bosses would employ a smaller number of workers for the same machines, others would be discharged and join the unemployed army and the conditions of the job become worse, the exploitation intensified, hours lengthened and wage cuts introduced. Therefore it should be made clear to every American worker that under capitalism the continuous working week is beneficial only for the bosses and would rob the workers of free time. Workers in America should be on guard against "similar" slogans introduced by the capitalists and fight them. Under capitalism such would only be part and parcel of capitalist rationalization and speed up.

#### INCREASED PRODUCTION.

The continuous working week makes possible an increase in production, which in the Soviet Union is to the benefit of the working class, but here in America it would benefit only the profiteering capitalist class. In the Soviet Union, for example in the mining industry, it is estimated an increase of 20% will take place under this new system, which means that the Five Year Plan for mining has the possibility of being fulfilled in four years.

Because the machines are working the whole year, and with 65 days each year added to the work days, the amount of manufactured goods and other products turned out by the workers is bound to increase. It is estimated that the total output of Soviet industry will be increased by 25%. The continuous working week also will save the Soviet industries millions of roubles each year because production is

always taking place uninterrupted by the previous too frequent general holidays, therefore in all industries where fires must continually be kept going, like smelters, Bessemer furnaces, glass-blowers, etc., the saving in fuel alone will be enormous.

#### INCREASES THE STANDARD OF LIVING

Not only has the continuous working week brought advantages in the way of increased production, the saving of material, reduction of unemployment and an increased number of rest days, it has also brought about various cultural advantages. The more frequent rest days (four days work, one day rest) preserves the physical powers of the workers. This has a great bearing on industrial accidents, reducing them greatly. This is a great step forward towards a decided improvement of the general well being of the workers.

Soviet industry in 1929-30 will make about two billion roubles profit. This enables the workers to receive an increase in wages and raises the standard of living of the workers. There being no stockholders and no dividends to pay to speculators and idle rich, the profits of Soviet industry are used to better the standard of life for the workers; part of the profits are put back into industry to improve and to expand and develop industry; part is given to the workers in the form of wage increases and part is spent on collective cultural work for the workers. Soviet industry contributes 10% of its profits to a fund for the improvement of the living conditions of the workers. This means that with two billion roubles profits in 1929-30, two hundred million roubles will go to the workers in the form of funds for the improvement of the living conditions of the workers out of the profits of the State industries. By a decision of the workers' organizations this fund is used for the construction of houses, clubs, the maintenance of nurseries and various other social activities for the benefit of the workers and peasants.

#### CULTURAL ADVANTAGES.

Soviet workers have every opportunity for using and enjoying to the best advantage their rest days. Everything is

being done, upon the initiative of the workers and peasants themselves, through their soviets, to widen their cultural life. A great deal has been written about this field of activity. All the theatres, cinemas, clubs and educational institutions have also introduced the new working week in conformity with the work in the industries. Since the number of people resting on each day in the week will be considerably more, cultural life and cultural activities will become greatly intensified. Now all amusement places, theatres, clubs, sport grounds, etc., will be able to better accommodate the workers who are pleasure bound, seeking either entertainment or education.

The demand of the masses on the cultural institutions will now be greater, but at the same time these institutions will be better able to provide more and better entertainment and amusement for visiting workers, since the influx of workers now will be distributed over every week day, and not concentrated on one or two days in the week. It also relieves the strain on the employees of these institutions, the players, musicians, attendants, and others who were usually rushed to the extreme on week-ends. A worker who now desires to see a certain opera or hear a famous orchestra will not have to be turned down because the place is already filled to capacity; or if he wants to go to a park or bathing resort with his family he will not find conditions so overcrowded that rest and pleasure is impossible. Instead of having tens of thousands of workers seeking recreation at the same time, at the same place, with the consequences that only a few of them really enjoy or get the desired recreation, because of congested transportation, crowded conditions of the beach, etc. (which is far from hygienic), the introduction of the continuous working week gives every one a chance to really enjoy rest days and the opportunities for recreation in every place, will be better and more extensively utilized.

The large institutions which cater to the needs of the workers, for example, the unions sick benefit funds, outpatient departments of clinics and hospitals, community dining rooms, co-operative stores and so forth, also work according to the time of the continuous working week. The result is that shopping crowds are lessened, and so are the queues at



the co-operatives or those paying dues at the unions. Just as much business is done, but it is spread out over the week and one can now expedite affairs in much less time than formerly.

#### WHAT ABOUT FAMILY.

This phase of the continuous working week seems to bother the bourgeoisie most of all. "Family life will disappear," they cry in alarm. "Father and mother will have different rest days and the children cannot be together in the family bosom any longer. Family life is the cornerstone of the nation, etc., etc."

But the bourgeoisie forget that the cornerstone of Soviet life is not the family. The life of the workers and peasants in the Soviet Union does not center around the narrow confines of the family, with its pettyness, but around the collective activities of the masses in building socialism both on the economic and cultural front. Comradeship and aid to all workers whether they are family members or not, best of every workers' abilities is for the collective, for society. The instrument through which this is accomplished is the workers, peasants and soldiers soviets.

Great steps have been taken to keep up with the demands of the workers for institutions which will enable them to live "collectively." Community dining rooms, kitchens, community houses, day nurseries, playgrounds, etc., are built in connection with the factories and workshops, but so far it has been impossible to keep up with the requirements of the workers for the establishment of such institutions. This fact was taken into consideration when the uninterrupted working week went into effect. Although the general weekly rest day for all workers has been abolished, each worker, if he so wishes, is able to arrange that his rest day falls on the same day as other members of his family, or other comrades and friends with which he wants to spend his free time.

#### SOME RESULTS OF THE ADOPTION OF THE FIVE-DAY WEEK.

The direct results from this economic improvement are many: earnings of the workers have increased, the output of production has increased, the number of employed



*This woman worker is factory production manager.*

workers have increased, which directly results in a better standard of living. We quote here a few examples as reported by the Central Council of Trade Unions in the U.S.S.R. in its *Trade Union Bulletin*.

*Earnings will increase by 8%.*

"The change to the continuous production in the main departments of the factory 'Krasny Vyborjetz' (Leningrad) has led to an increase in the output by 20 to 25 per cent. The average earnings of the workers increased by 8 per cent. A new shift of workers has been employed."

#### *Increased output.*

The adoption of the 5-day week at the factory 'Cartontol' almost doubled the output. Instead of the usual monthly output of 30,000 rolls of cardboard, the factory after the introduction of the 5-day week has been producing 57,000 rolls of cardboard, almost double the quantity. At the Ruberoid mill the production increased from 250 rolls a day to 700 or nearly thrice.

#### *Labor force increased by 12 per cent.*

The first results of the five-day week in 35 mines of the Donetz coal trust are very favorable. The output of coal in these mines increased up to 35%, the productivity of labor increased by 4% and the labor force has grown by 12%.

*Wage increases.*

The first results of the adoption of the five-day week at a number of large cement factories in the Ukraine show an increase of production by 25%.

*20,000 new workers.*

No later than December the five-day week will be introduced in a number of mines in the Donetz Basin. As a result 20,000 additional workers will get employment.

The Central Committee of the Miners' Union requested the Donetz Coal Trust to allocate 5 million roubles for the construction of communal homes for the new workers, and 400,000 roubles for setting up a chain of provision stores for them. The mines which are working on the 7-hour basis will be the first to adopt the five-day week.

The rational distribution of the working hours and rest days leads everywhere to an improvement in the quality of production, an increase in the productivity of labor and, consequently, in the wages and the employment of additional groups of workers in industry."

All of the above examples conclusively prove that this reorganization of production on the part of the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union frees them of all unproductive expenditures involved by the anarchistic methods used in capitalistic countries.

Many of the capitalists in America have for example tried to introduce various schemes (thirteen month calendar, etc.), the Eastman Kodak Co., the Montgomery Ward Co., but under capitalism it is impossible to organize production uniformly and systematically, neither can agriculture nor distribution be freed from capitalist anarchy, because of the inherent nature of capitalism, which acts as a fetter on its production forces, with its competition, its struggle for markets and the schemings of the imperialist powers to outdo and exterminate each other and the weaker powers. These advantages over capitalist economy do not exist merely theoretically; they are enormous factors in the devel-

opment of Soviet economy. The following table shows the average yearly growth of Soviet economy from 1924-28, as compared with capitalist countries:

England	1%
United States	3%
France	3.3%
Germany	6.3%
Soviet Union	27.3%

Soviet industry has developed about five times more rapidly than that of the United States. The speed of industrial development in the Soviet Union is 27 times greater than that of England.

## CONTINUOUS WORKING WEEK AND RELIGION.

Another result of the adoption of the continuous working week is the elimination of Sunday as a general holiday thereby taking away from the remnants of the Church in the Soviet Union one of its last footholds. Among the backward strata of the workers and peasants in the Soviet Union there are still people who cling to the old religious prejudices. One should understand that it is not an easy matter to completely eliminate from the broad masses of the workers the age old teachings of institutions that had such control upon the masses as the Greek Orthodox and Mohammedan churches. They demanded obedience and complete submissiveness and humility which kept the masses in ignorance and darkness. The campaign against the teachings of any religion has been successfully conducted for several years but there still exists remnants of these teachings among the most isolated and backward masses. But doing away with Sunday as a general religious "holy" day will contribute a great deal to give these remnants a hard blow.

## EFFECT ON RURAL ECONOMY.

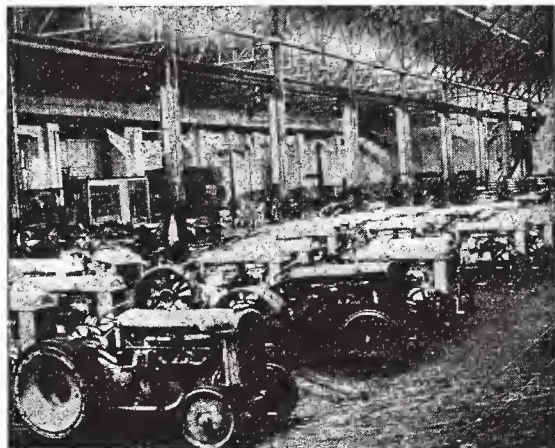
This simple idea of the continuous working week has, as we have seen, been a remarkable factor in driving forward industrialization in the Soviet Union. Even the peasant, although of necessity his time cannot be regulated as can



the factory workers, has been able to carry out to a much greater extent the program for the industrialization of the countryside. The Five Year Plan for the organizing of Sovchoz (Soviet State Farms) and kolchoz (collective farms) can only become a reality if the industry of the Soviet Union keeps pace with the demands of the peasants for tools and equipment for such large scale farming.

"A TRACTOR EVERY SIX MINUTES"

"A tractor every six minutes" is one of the ways in which this demand of the peasants will be realized. The new trac-



*A tractor every six minutes*

tor factory now being built near Stalingrad will produce daily 141 tractors. Forty thousand tractors will be annually contributed by this factory alone for the socialist reconstruction work. This means that the workers in this factory will go ahead of America. The McCormick-Deering Works produces 110 tractors a day, the workers in Stalingrad will produce 31 more.

Lenin said: "One must abolish the difference between city and country, as well as the difference between manual and

intellectual labor. This is a task that requires a great deal of time. In order to make this possible, a great stride forward is essential for the development of the productive forces, for breaking down the resistance of the remnants of petty production—a resistance that often is passive and therefore tougher and more difficult to break down; a great stride forward is necessary, in order to be able to crush sluggishness and the influence of old habits which are linked together with these remnants."

This is the road on which the Soviet workers are now travelling ... and the continuous working week is one instrument, forged by the masses, to complete the victory over the bourgeoisie and to build socialism in the Soviet Union.

